

**BOARD OF MAYOR AND ALDERMEN
PUBLIC HEARING**

April 28, 2003

7:00 PM

Mayor Baines called the meeting to order.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Aldermen Wihby, Guinta, Sysyn, Osborne, Pinard, Shea, DeVries,
Garrity, Smith, Thibault, Forest, Lopez, O’Neil

Absent: Alderman Gatsas

Mayor Baines stated in my excitement at the end of the meeting, I forgot to single out two people who have worked tirelessly on behalf of the project we approved prior. The leadership provided by the Vice Chairman of the School Board Leslie Stewart and the Finance Chair Tom Donovan have been absolutely essential to the eventual success of this passing and I want to personally congratulate a job well done.

Mayor Baines advised that the purpose of the special meeting is a public hearing to receive comments on the proposed Fiscal Year 2004 municipal budget and the proposed Community Improvement Program for the Fiscal Year 2004 to FY2009 period in accordance with the procedures established in RSA 44:10 and in satisfaction of any other local, state or federal law that may apply. Mayor Baines noted that the Clerk shall present the resolutions, the subject of which contain all of the appropriations presently proposed, following which a brief presentation may be made and public comments will be heard.

Deputy City Clerk Carol Johnson presented the proposed Appropriating Resolutions:

“Raising Monies and Making Appropriations for the Fiscal Year 2004.”

“A Resolution appropriating to the Manchester Aggregation Program the sum of \$820,634 from Aggregation Fees for the Fiscal Year 2004.”

“A Resolution appropriating to the Manchester Airport Authority the sum of \$42,676,942 from Special Airport Revenue Funds for Fiscal Year 2004.”

“Appropriating all Incremental Meals and Rooms Tax Revenue Received by the City in Fiscal Year 2004 and held in the Civic Center Fund, for the payment of the City’s Obligations in Said Fiscal Year Under the Financing Agreement.”

“A Resolution appropriating the sum of \$2,952,578 from Recreation User Charges to the Recreation Division for Fiscal Year 2004.”

“A Resolution appropriating to the Manchester School District the sum of \$127,075,275 for the Fiscal Year 2004.”

“A Resolution appropriating to the Manchester School Food and Nutrition Services program the sum of \$4,850,750 from School Food and Nutrition Services Revenues for Fiscal Year 2004.”

“A Resolution appropriating the sum of \$15,040,695 from Sewer User Rental Charges to the Environmental Protection Division for Fiscal Year 2004.”

“A Resolution appropriating to the Manchester Transit Authority the sum of \$850,000 for the Fiscal Year 2004.”

“Continuation of the Central Business Service District.”

“A Resolution appropriating to the Central Business Service District the sum of \$225,000 from Central Business Service District Funds

"Approving the Community Improvement Program for 2004, Raising and Appropriating Monies Therefore, and Authorizing Implementation of Said Program."

Mayor Baines advised that the resolution shall suffice with the presentation this is a special meeting shall be open to public comment; that each person when recognized shall come to the nearest microphone, state their name and address in a clear and loud voice for the record; that each person shall be given one opportunity to speak and comments shall be limited to three minutes to allow all participants the opportunity to speak; that once all present have been allowed to speak should there be a topic not discussed those wishing to speak a second time shall be provided the opportunity to do so.

Deputy City Clerk Johnson stated Your Honor the Clerk would note first for the record that we have received one communication from Families in Transition. They are requesting the City of Manchester put in a community development request, to reconsider funding for continued support of services of the Spruce Street Transitional Housing Program, Amherst Street Transitional Housing Program and the Community Supportive Housing Program in the amount of \$20,000 and for capital repairs on the Millyard I Transitional Housing Program in the amount of \$6,000 for a total of \$26,000, and it is signed by Maureen Beauregard, their President, who could not be here this evening. Next we would move on to the listing of those who have signed up.

Linda Dallaire, Deputy Director for homeownership at the Neighborworks Homeownership Center, a program of Manchester Neighborhood Housing Services, 968 Elm Street. Mayor Baines, Aldermen I would like to thank you for your past support and for allowing our organization to apply for the current round of CIP funds. These funds are crucial to support the homeownership education and lending program. Manchester Neighborhood Housing Services is a non-profit community development to housing organization dedicated to the revitalization of Manchester's neighborhoods and improving the availability of housing for low to moderate income families. NH NHS recently celebrated 10 years of service to the

community. The Neighborworks Homeownership Center specializes in providing comprehensive homeownership education and lending products for low to moderate-income households. All education programs that are offered at the center are free and open to the public. In 2002 we provided home ownership, financial fitness and landlord training to over 370 individuals. Eight-hour homeownership seminars are offered in English and Spanish. In June of 2001 we offered the first time homebuyer financial fitness club to help low to moderate income families develop strong financial management skills, build financial assets, gain control of their debts, and understand how bad credit can impair their ability to purchase a home. An exciting component that was added to the homebuyer financial fitness program last year was to individual development accounts or IDA programs. This program is a savings program that allows low-income people to save for a down payment and other related costs for purchasing a home. For every dollar saved, there's a three-dollar match. Individuals must attend the homebuyer financial fitness club and be eligible to enroll into the program. It has been more and more difficult for low-income families to qualify to buy a home. According to a recent study by Caldwell Banker the average sales price of a home in Manchester runs between \$175,000 and \$200,000. Despite the escalation in costs of homes over the last several years, in 2002 the Center produced 28 homebuyers, 22 were low to moderate income households, eight were single family head of households. Manchester NHS received other funds to support the program from foundation grants and corporations who recognize the benefits of providing free and post purchase homeownership education for low to moderate income residents. We currently maximize these sources and request support through the City CIP program to continue to offer the best home ownership program in the State. In 2002 the support received from the CIP funds leveraged \$100,000 in program support and over \$2.9 million in loan volume.

Meghan Brady, 395 DW Highway, stated I am the Executive Director of St. Joseph Community Services. We operate the Meals on Wheels and congregate dining program here in the City of Manchester and also countywide. I live in the City of Nashua and we operate three sites here in Manchester. I am here to address our funding request for our meals programs, the Meals on Wheels and the congregate dining program. Let me start by thanking the City of Manchester, Mayor Baines and the Aldermen for your past support and because of that support we do not have a waiting list for our programs, and to put that in context I'll tell you that over 40 percent of the Meals on Wheels in our country have a waiting list for food. Sometimes the wait is as long as three to six months and it's very distressing to see that. A lot of people don't realize that Meals on Wheels programs can have waiting lists. They assume that Meals on Wheels is an entitlement program like Medicare or Medicaid, but it is not. The funding that we receive from our State contract does not cover the full cost of a meal. We do fund raising, as a matter of fact we did our ballroom gala last night for Meals on Wheels that was over at the Center of NH, and we ask our clients to make donations, but no one is turned away if they can not afford to make a donation. But we also depend very heavily on the funding that we receive from the City of Manchester, to meet the needs of the frail elderly of the City. The people we work with tend to be an invisible

portion of the population. They are not the healthy, vibrant seniors that you might see in everyday walk of life, these are people who are in wheelchairs or vision impaired, who have arthritis so badly that they can't hold a utensil in their hand, they can not walk across a room. People who have had strokes, have had heart problems, they are homebound and they can not get out or they can not cook a meal on their own. They need assistance. Within a short walk of this building, there are a number of City residents that could not have remained in their own home or their apartments without the assistance of this program. It's a hot meal and a daily safety check and for many, many of our clients the only person they see that day is the driver for a five-minute visit. Over the past few years we've seen an increase in the number of clients over 80 years old. Two or three years ago 35 percent of our clients were over the age of 80, last year it was 40 percent, this year it's 44 percent. So we're seeing an increase in the need. I appreciate your past support and I hope for continued support from the City and I thank you for your time.

David Jenkins stated I am the Chief Financial Officer for Moore Center Services on Titus Ave. here in Manchester. Moore Center Services is one of the largest not for profit human service agencies in the State. We employ over 300 people and operate over a dozen sites in the Greater Manchester area. Our mission is to serve folks with developmental disabilities and acquired brain disorders. We are one of two area agencies in the State designated Region 7 and we serve Manchester and seven surrounding communities. The area agencies grew out of a lawsuit more than 20 years ago and closed the Laconia State School. New Hampshire was the first in the country to close its State institution and we currently are one of the leaders in the nation, with one of the most progressive systems in the country. Today Moore Center Services has a budget of about \$22 million and serves more than 1,100 individuals. Those services include service coordination, residential services, vocational services, nursing, rehabilitation; we run a child care center with 40 children, and family support. Their services are comprehensive and for many are 24 hours, 7 days a week. I'm here tonight to request \$54,000 for parking lot improvements. Our parking lot has been several years without repairs. We need the improvements to facilitate wheelchair accessibility and allow wheelchairs to maneuver easily and safely. The improvements will provide us with adequate appropriately sized wheelchair accessible parking spots. The improvement will eliminate some of the safety risks that have resulted in accidents and related workers comp claims, of which we've had about six over the last three to four years. Most importantly the parking layout with speed bumps, signage and traffic flow changes will assure we will never have an accident involving our children. The improvements will certainly enhance the appearance of a neighborhood that is a nicely laid out neighborhood and right now the parking lot and sidewalks are in pretty serious disrepair. We rely on most of our funding from the State. We've had seven or eight years without any inflationary increases and this year we'll be going to budget with an \$822,000 cut, which represents about five percent of our Medicaid revenue, and just to note that the facility that we are talking about is on Titus Ave. which is in South Manchester off from Calef Road.

Don Clark stated Director of Property Management for Technology Center in the millyard. I'm here speaking on behalf of the Millyard Landscape Revitalization Committee. I have to apologize I wasn't dressed for the occasion but I'm definitely a pinch hitter for getting second string, and I apologize for that. I am here speaking on behalf of a CIP request that the Committee put together. It was a two-phase project, with one half funded last year to the tune of about \$150,000, similar amount being requested this year. I'm sure you'll study and make note and copious notes of all the great photographs there, but basically everything on the bottom of that map highlighted in green were projects that were completed last year with the initial funding. They include removal of a lot of decrepit landscape; replacement of same with either planted materials or bark mulch, replacement and repair of sidewalks, curbing, etc. For the coming year the monies we are requesting would do more of the same and the pictures on the top will highlight that. Many of those items are actually safety concerns for both the general public and public works and the Highway Department when their driving around in their bombardier if they hit one of the broken balusters in the area there could be damage to humans, machinery, etc. Back in the sixties the millyard was one of the first urban renewal projects with some heavy funding from the Feds, in the eighties the City put a lot of capital dollars into the area as well. Unfortunately a lot of the work that was done then never encompassed a maintenance program for it. As such a lot of the growth and a lot of the improvements were damaged and fell into disrepair. We're speaking on behalf of the additional funding roughly \$150,000 to continue the repair and I know this is a tough year for budgets and I and my people don't necessarily want to pay more taxes, nor does anyone in the room likely, however we view this as more of an investment from which you can save a lot of money, pay me now or pay me later type of thing, and we think the potential for safety issues relating to some of the funds as they would be expended would be motivation enough to cause concern and to see your way clear to fund this project. Mary Tebo is from UNH Manchester Cooperative Extension and Mr. Thomas here is from the Highway Department. They'd be happy to answer any questions as well and thank you for the opportunity to speak.

Bruce Thomas stated basically what we want to do in a nutshell is paint all of the metal items in the millyard, including railings, lamp posts, replace some of the missing heads on the lamp posts down there, we also want to repair some walls that have railings on them where the railings are just swinging freely, and we want to fix some of the brick sidewalks down in that area. We want to add or replace the tree wells that exist in the are, most of those are way undersized and the granite around the tree wells is pretty much being pushed up from frost. We want to paint all of the benches, repair some of the pole boxes and replace all the signposts in the area that are all rusting. We need to paint the flagpoles; you can see them at the bottom of the street as you come down Spring Street, as well as the flag posts in the Arms Park area. We have some bulbs that need to be replaced and we'll paint and trash receptacle paint and repainting or benches. So basically everything that's metal that's down there is rusting way and needs to be maintained and that's basically where the Highway Department comes in is putting out those contracts to do that work.

Mary Tebo stated just one last comment. This is all part of a long-term maintenance plan so that we don't get into the situation again, but we've got to put the capital up front now to repair the damage. Then we'll be all set for the long term.

Ken Viscarello stated I'm the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Intown Manchester. With me here tonight is Stephanie Lewry who is our Executive Director whom most of you know. I want to take the opportunity to thank the Board of Mayor and Aldermen for their continued support of Intown over the past few years and hopefully when you see some of the things that Intown has been able to do over the past few years, we hope that your support was well placed. Specifically tonight I'd like to thank you for earmarking some of the monies in the CIP program to fund our summer concert series. For of those who know, our 2002 summer concert series was a phenomenal success. We had approximately 1,200 people attend each concert, even the ones that were in the rain. The bands were diversified; there were country acts, funk acts, a South American band from the Andes, and something for just about everybody. We also pleased with the demographics. We had sent something to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen last September that showed out of the concert goers that we had, about 65 percent were in the 40 and over age group and we felt like we were bringing people with disposal income to downtown Manchester and it wasn't just a concert series for young kids. We know the funding is tight so we appreciate any funding you can give us with respect to this program and hope through this successful program you'll be disposed to programs we bring before you in the future. I just wanted to give you a brief update on the some of our other activities. One that we're very excited about this summer, this summer we're going to undertake a graffiti removal program. As a lot of you know right here in the downtown graffiti has been a constant problem. We are in the process of purchasing a power washer. We underwent a pilot program last fall that was very successful and we're confident that the majority of the street level commercial graffiti can be removed here in downtown. In addition we're hoping that we can work with the City and the various City agencies to remove some of the graffiti on some of the public spaces in town, so we're very excited about that. Finally in summary, I just wanted to say we do partner with the Millyard Landscaping Revitalization and Maintenance Committee. As I stated I understand that this year the budget is very, very tight, but if there is any room for reconsideration we would urge the Board of Mayor and Aldermen through the CIP program to find some funding for that program. I think as they stated the goal is to provide low cost maintenance, however we have to deal with years and years of neglect in the millyard and we have to get it to a certain level.

Mayor Baines stated before we call the next presenter I have to apologize, I do have to leave because of a family situation that I've got to deal with and I will ask Alderman O'Neil to chair the rest of the meeting. If I did not have to leave I assure you I would be staying.

Lea Key stated I am a housing counselor with The Way Home. Last year The Way Home helped more than 2,000 Manchester residents with a housing related need. This year the Mayor's proposed budget includes HUD funds for use in three of our program areas. Reducing lead paint hazards that harm children, housing counseling to prevent homelessness, and assisting tenants with security deposits and rent. We want to thank the City for dedicating funds to meet these critical needs.

Rita Chamberlain stated I am the Director of Research and Program Development for Girls Incorporated of New Hampshire, with me is Pat Barss who is the Regional Director for the Manchester Girl's Center. We wanted to come here to thank you, as does everybody else. I reside in Nashua, but I have tell you that I feel like I pitch my tent at the State administrative offices which are just down the street from you at 65 Market Street. Like any other human service organization we rely on our staff for a great deal and we also rely on the City for their support. We've been in Manchester for three years. We currently serve annually over 300 girls in our programs. Your small funding leverages a great deal of impact for the girls in this City. This is the first year that we have been at Bakersville with a coed program, serving both boys and girls in a disadvantaged neighborhood with a vast diversity of heritages and it's been an interesting experience for us. We feel we bring a great deal to the City as an organization that is part of a national affiliation. We've been serving in the State since 1975. We have only been in Manchester three years and we appreciate the opportunity that you have provided for us for funding, for the programs, and the services that we provide to the girls. We wouldn't be here without the support of the Manchester Housing Authority who have dedicated space to us at the Bishop Lee O'Neil Community Center down the street from here and other collaborating partners. None of the human service agencies that you see here tonight operate in a vacuum. I believe Manchester has one of the most successful networking systems of human services and youth serving organizations in this state, and I can say that because we serve in most places in this State. So thank you again for your funding and for your support and we look forward to a continued cooperation of partnering with the City.

Jennifer Soldati stated I'm the Director of the Hot Couch Teen Art Center on Elm Street in Manchester. First of all I'd like to thank you for your previous support of our center. I thought a picture is worth a thousand words, so I wanted to bring with me tonight some of the sample art. These are untrained, at risk teenagers who come to our drop in center to take part in art activities. They are not required to take part in art activities, we are simply a drop-in center where kids can have a place to go after school rather than hanging around on corners. We offer mosaic art, painting, drawing, pottery; we have a fully equipped photography dark room. I call the kid's art, art from the heart. They don't have to have a certain level of performance in school to come to the center. They pick up the paint and they just tell it like it is or how they feel. Sometimes it's not art that you or I might understand, but it makes them feel better. We serve about 300 unduplicated kids a year and I want to thank you very much for your contribution you have been paying for our utilities, \$5,000 a

year and this would be the third year we are receiving funding. We're open during school vacations and summers and during the week Monday through Friday from 2:00 PM to 9:00 PM. I'd be happy to answer any questions you might have. That is an invitation to our Art Show in a couple of weeks.

Angela Wilson stated I'm the Program Coordinator for the Youth Opportunities Unlimited After School Program as part of the Manchester YMCA. Thank you for your time tonight and thank you for your past support of the YOU After School Program. YOU is located at Beech Street and Henry Wilson Schools in the center city of Manchester. We serve children in kindergarten through 5th grade. We've served over 106 students so far this year. Three components of our program are the primary program, the peer program, and the family component. YOU is a research based program that's been serving Manchester for over 12 years now. We provide at risk students with a very structured daily environment that works off from daily lesson plans and monthly curriculum themes, such as life skills, community involvement, family, and self-discipline. YOU serves the center city population 88 percent of our parents are considered to be low or very low income. Ninety-five percent of our parents are working and 50 percent of those parents that are working are single parents. I just wanted to read an excerpt from a parent letter: "I am as you know a full-time working mom who is currently doing a solo with a six year old in first grade, a 19 year old in his first year of college, and a 16 year old in her third year in high school. I know I don't have to tell you that I have my hands full. YOU has a great after schools program for children like my daughter. My daughter loves to be with other children. She is learning how to listen to instructions at YOU, she is learning how to honor rules, and understand why they are put there. She is in a safe environment with dedicated staff members. The children at YOU are being taught to be respectful, caring, responsible, and trustworthy every day. I believe the YOU staff are dedicated to loving children and helping them realize their talents." I'd like to thank you again for your time tonight and thank you for your continued support of the YOU After School Program. The money that City of Manchester offers to our program allows us to provide a very low cost childcare to many of the working parents that live in Manchester's center city.

Hal Jordan stated I am the President of the Manchester YMCA. I am here just to extend our deep appreciation to the Aldermen for supporting this wonderful housing collaborative between three of our Manchester colleges. The NH Institute of Art, UNH Manchester, and the NH Community Technical College. I just wanted to say that the funding for the central elevator enables us to unlock the upper two floors of the YMCA for development and bring in a wonderful body of students who live and reside in downtown Manchester and fill it full of life and vitality and also spend money. We know that the project is going to contribute somewhere around \$600,000 a year to the downtown economy. It's a great program and we're most pleased that it will keep Manchester students going to college in Manchester instead of looking out of state. I'd like to introduce Anita Caplin from the NH Technical College to say a few words.

Anita Caplin stated thank you also for your support for this project. I am the Vice President of Student and Community Services at NH Community Technical College. We're very excited and really thrilled to be part of this initiative. We are, as you well know, a comprehensive community college that provides not only transfer opportunities but also specialized vocational training. Not all of the programs at all of the technical community colleges are offered at all campuses, so we frequently have students coming to us for specialized programs in HVAC, automotive training, who come from as far north as Berlin where these programs may not be offered and are looking for housing. So this opportunity would provide a mechanism to keep these students in our State and our technical community college system. We thank you for your support and we look forward to this project.

John St. Hilaire stated I am here tonight representing the Queen City Trail Alliance and Manchester Parks & Rec for the CIP, and for the trails, for the funds that have already been set aside to match the CMAC funding that has been approved for the Poscatequa Trail and other projects that are going on like the Queen City Trail Alliance trail. We appreciate everything that the City has done in aiding us to go forward as far as we've gone. For those of you that don't know, you will know shortly, I'll be making a presentation to you to let you know exactly what's going on with the Queen City Trail which is moving full steam ahead. In the inset while the CIP funds and the matching funds for the CMAC are very important to help us get going, the trail that we're working on, the Queen City Trail, the Manchester – Lawrence line from Perimeter Road down eventually to Canal Street, will end up costing the City and the taxpayers nothing to initially build and we're putting together a community organization so that hopefully it will cost the City very little to maintain and will be maintained by the users and the abutters. We are also very active with the school system. I'm meeting with the Southside School; we've already had some hopeful engineering students at Memorial High School who have come down and met. One of our committee members happens to be an engineer with the Lewis-Berger Group and we're starting a junior Queen City Trail Alliance and it's to get the schools involved, it's to get the children involved that are going to be using the trail. Not just to go out there with bags to pick up and clean up and help us maintain it, but to actually help us design it. What they want, to be involved, for them to have ownership in the trail, in the building of it. It's a great, great asset to the City. The Poscatequa Trail, The Queen City Trail, which is going to become part of a statewide trail, for those of you who haven't heard yet, the I93 bike pedestrian trail that's going to go from Salem to Concord, is going to utilize the Manchester – Lawrence rail line. So it's going to give us 33 miles of unimpeded walking, biking, hiking use for handicap, for kids for roller blades and inline skates and their skateboards and family fun. It's going to give links to our commercial areas to help eliminate some of the traffic situation and allow people to go from the residential area to the commercial area without every putting their key into the ignition and causing some more environmental pollution. It's also going to bring Nuts Pond to the forefront. We are in the process now of working on that and the trail will be built around Nuts Pond. The proposed trail that's been there for so many years that Home

Depot is going to be part of and so many other people have talked about doing, we're going to do and it's going to be done and this project has moved along with lightening speed. Mostly because of the help of Ron Johnson and the City and the Aldermen that have been involved that have pointed us in direction and given us the information that we need. I thank you for your continued support and for the funding.

Cary Flanagan stated I am Program Manager at Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Greater Manchester. I really appreciate the opportunity to speak to everybody tonight, the Aldermen, unfortunately not the Mayor and to thank you all for your past support. Big Brothers/Big Sisters has been providing caring adult mentors to children from single parent families in the Greater Manchester area for more than 36 years. Mentoring is a prevention program that reduces youth drug and alcohol consumption as well as school truancy and youth violence. While at the same time increasing a child's self esteem, self-confidence, and trust of adults. Children who have a positive adult role model perform better in school and relate better to their peers and other adults in their lives. They are more likely to graduate high school and sometimes they're the first member of their family to do so. Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Greater Manchester is a unique and cost effective program which closes cultural and economic and religious barriers. Adult volunteers serve as Big Brothers/Big Sisters direct service providers. A small paid staff oversees the application process and supervises the matcher volunteers and children. We believe the Big Brothers/Big Sisters programs can save other community agency resources. It has been estimated that the cost of service to a child in the Big Brother/Big Sister program is \$950 per matched volunteer and child per year. This averages to less than \$3 a day per child. By contrast the average daily cost of a child at the Youth Development Center is \$268. YDC is the Department of Youth Development Services residential juvenile correctional facility based here in Manchester. If Big Brothers/Big Sisters prevented only ten children from being sent to YDC the savings would be \$2,680 per day or \$943,360 in a year. A study conducted by Mark Owen, associate professor of management at the Owen School of Management, Vanderbilt University, has found that monetary value of savings a high-risk youth can be between \$1.5 and \$2 million over the lifetime of that youth. Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Greater Manchester has been growing at a rapid rate over the past two years. In calendar year 2002 we served more than 250 children from the Manchester community and all of our programs have a 20 percent increase over the previous year. We will pass that achievement this year. Currently we have only two part-time case workers in the community based program and to do the thorough intakes necessary to make appropriate and long lasting matches, and to monitor and support those matches. This past year our United Way funding was cut by 25 percent. We do not receive any additional funding for the core program in Manchester, other than our own fund raising events. We're therefore very dependent on the funding from the City of Manchester. Children served by Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Greater Manchester are those children who are most in need of the kind of support and guidance that is provided by a big brother or a big sister. We thank you very much, I really appreciate the opportunity to speak to all of you tonight and again, thank you for your past support.

Ken Snow stated I am a resident of Ward 2, I'm also a social worker and the Vice President of Community Relations at the Mental Health Center of Greater Manchester. We're newcomers to this process. We've never in the past received any CIP money, despite the fact that we're a 43-year-old non-profit agency that's a designated community mental health program for the City of Manchester and the surrounding towns. Last year we served 8,144 people from the area in need of psychiatric care. We operate eight facilities in Manchester; two of which are older buildings that we own there were constructed before the American's With Disabilities Act. They happen to be the two buildings where we serve our senior citizens as well as the most disabled individuals that we see, including those with co-occurring physical disabilities. We requested \$15,000 from the CIP to bring the elevators in those buildings up to ADA standards so that we can more safely serve individuals in those buildings. We're not listed as one of the agencies that's included in the grants, but we are included in a pool of money to upgrade buildings to bring them to ADA standard and we would very much appreciate the consideration of anybody who is involved with that decision at allowing us to do it.

Sienna Larson stated I work at the NH Minority Health Coalition, we are based at 25 Lowell St. and we have a web site www.nhhealthequity.org The Minority Health Coalition is a Manchester based non-profit organization working to improve access to adequate and appropriate health care individuals with barriers to this care. We do this by providing health education and referrals to our clients, as well as cultural competency training for providers. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support for the Women's World program this year. This is a free home based education program teaching racial, ethnic, and linguistic minority women and their families about how to be healthy and how to access local human service agencies, many of which you provide support to. We serve as a bridge between our clients and Manchester service providers. Our clients are primarily immigrants, refugees, the uninsured, underinsured, and 95 percent of our clients speak little if any English. In the Women's World program bilingual, bicultural adult peer educators who speak English, Spanish, French, Arabic, Creole, and Bosnian conduct educational sessions in clients homes and teach about health topics ranging from breast cancer and immunizations, to issues of domestic violence and how to access child health insurance. While this is a grant funded program that must meet the program goals of specific funders, to teach about certain topics, the CIP funding gives us the latitude to teach about a much wider variety of topics than what would otherwise be possible allowing us to truly serve the actual needs of our clients. In the last nine months CIP funding has made it possible to provide home based education and referrals to 243 unduplicated Manchester minority residents. Your support is critical to the health and well being of Manchester's minorities and also greatly assists us at the Minority Health Coalition in leveraging further funds at the State level and hopefully at the National level this year. Thank you for your support and we look forward to a continued partnership in the coming year and again we are www.nhhealthequity.org

John Wood stated thank you for the opportunity to talk about the Friends of the Valley Cemetery. We are a non-profit group that is working in partnership with the Parks & Recreation and Cemetery Department to restore Valley Cemetery. This year in the CIP request you'll note there's a \$200,000 request. This would be matched by the LCHIP funds from the State and our objective is to continue the restoration of the Valley Cemetery. We had this brochure printed, which you have, to get more people to enjoy the wonderful jewel that's in the center of Manchester and we appreciate your consideration of our request for \$200,000 to match the LCHIP budget and we also want to thank you for past donations to our group.

Howie Howe stated I'm here tonight because I'm a fiscal conservative and Republican and you are going to hear some weird things out of me tonight because Alderman O'Neil reminded me that I seldom say nice things about you guys, or to you about anything you've done. I want to commend you tonight and the Mayor for what you did for the school department. That's not what I'm here to talk totally about but I think it was great that you had the courage and integrity to take the steps tonight to bring Manchester into the next century and to prepare us to get future economic development that we're going to need to drive down our taxes. There's going to be many fine organizations here tonight asking you for money. I'm not here representing anyone asking you for money, but I am here as a 20 year Marine Corp. veteran to talk about Liberty House, which is a transitional house for homeless veterans to try and get them off the streets, straighten their lives out, get jobs, and get back into the common place. We have a lot of people there that have private interests and special interest and everything else, and some of these people on this board have gone out of their way to make projects like this hard. No every project that comes into this City needs fiscal funding from the City of Manchester but they do need understanding and support and a little bit of cooperation. When it comes down to things like building permits and allowances and so forth, they need your support and your help without having them say look I need the money to do it. So I'm saying to you on this Liberty House project, please Leo Lafermier is upstairs, I've seen him, I know the man has integrity and hope that he will help work with Don Duhaime and those guys to get this project going. Alderman Lopez I have a little question for you. Just because you didn't propose the project doesn't mean you have to go out of your way to make the project tough on them. These are veterans, they've served this country, and I expect you sir to give them the chance to rehabilitate themselves and pick themselves up.

Alderman O'Neil interjected Mr. Howe I would ask you to stay on message please and not address any Alderman individually.

Mr. Howe stated well I think the issue needed to be addressed and it seemed like no one else was going to afford the opportunity. Gentlemen and ladies I ask you please, support projects even if you don't have fund them and allow these things to happen because this is improvements to our community.

Alderman Lopez stated I will address you but I will address you at another time because you've got your facts totally wrong.

Greg Schneider stated I work for Southern NH Services. I'm Director of Community and Multicultural Services and I'm just here tonight to briefly thank the Committee and the Aldermen for the support that we've received for your programs in the past. Specifically the Voluntary Action Center, Info Bank, and to our Hispanic programs, Alpha Peer and The Latin American Center, and the numbers are miniscule compared to the kind of budgets you deal with, but the dollars are very important to the clients we serve. Again I just wanted to say thank you for the support you've shown and for the numbers that are proposed in the budget here.

Sara Varela stated I work for a non-profit called Micro Credit NH. We are actually part of the NH Community Loan Fund and Micro Credit has been serving the City of Manchester since 1990, however we used to be Working Capital and we switched our name to Micro Credit NH in 1996. This is the first time that we apply for funding to the City and we understand it's been a tight year for budget, however we do hope that if there's room for reconsideration that you reconsider our application. What is it that we do? Basically we help people that want to start businesses or have been in business for a while and form support groups of business owners or people thinking of starting a business. What they do is they get together once a month to give and receive feedback to share ideas, to promote each others businesses, and also to review and approve loans for each other. We give small loans from \$500 to \$10,000 without credit check or collateral. We do outreach and serve anybody interested in our program. However, we do a concerted effort in trying to outreach to the people that need it the most. People that get credit through us have the opportunity to rebuild their credit history, reestablish their credit history, improve the credit history, whatever the case may be, because we offer the loans without credit checking or collateral. In Manchester we collaborate with several other organizations where we host our meetings, our groups meet at the Small Business Amoskeag Incubator at the Manchester Community Resource Center. We've held workshops and seminars at the Manchester Public Library Families in Transition. We also offer the IDA program which is a one to three match to help people that are not interested in looking for loans that are not ready to apply for a loan but that want to improve or start a business can do so through a match savings program, so they can do this through their savings instead of the loans. Here in Manchester we currently have four business loan groups that once a month, some do meet twice a month. We're in the process of forming the fifth business loan group and again what these groups do is help business entrepreneurs break the isolation of running a small business, get into a support group, refer businesses back and forth to each other, and create a positive atmosphere to brainstorm all the difficulties of what it takes to run a small business. So I want to thank you for listening to me tonight and if at all possible I'd like to ask you to reconsider our application into the budget.

Kim Valdez stated I work at Child and Family Services which is at 99 Hanover Street in Manchester and I live at 27 Shaw Drive, which is in Bedford. I just want to thank you for the financial support that you have given to three of the programs at our agency. The Runaway and Homeless Youth Program, the Home Care and Homemaker Services, and the Childcare Coordinator position. Because of the funding you have so graciously provided us we're able to assist children, families, teens, the elderly, as well as early care, and school age providers in Manchester. The funds provided through the Community Improvement Program have helped us to leverage additional State and Federal funds, which in turn support these three programs. We look forward to providing continued support and services in this community and I thank you for your time this evening.

Craig Everett stated I'm the Executive Director of Helping Hands Outreach Center at 50 Lowell Street in Manchester. Our funding request before you really needs a little bit of explanation. I am new to the non-profit world coming out of a sales background and used to putting together proposals that are just pure facts. When first making our presentation we were asked if there was additional sources of funds for the programs that are proposed. Because of the timeline, the short timeline under which I had to put that together it was not made clear but the funds that we requested are strictly, almost strictly, for materials. Almost all of the labor for projects that are to be undertaken is either donated labor or very heavily discounted labor. We are in need of not just repairing the roof on the facility, but a complete replacement. It has been patched a number of times over the years and we're just running out of places to patch. It's almost one large patch right now. We are talking about a complete re-roofing job. We are looking at expanding our program to not only provide housing but to provide more of a program for the men who come in. We are a transitional shelter for men in recovery. Many of those men are veterans and funding from the Veterans Administration has been cut short. We are looking to continue to serve these men, not to expand and reach more, but to help these guys get back on their feet and back out as productive members of the community.

Billy Dodd, 181 Mammoth Road, Ward 7, I'm glad Mr. Shea is my Alderman because I can count on that chair being alive. Thank you very much for your input. Going down through the budget that was back here, I'm noticing a couple of things. Item 180 Office of Youth Services \$538,000. I have to assume, I don't know what's under all those subheadings under that category, but I would assume that things had to be slashed out of what they were asking for in there. Anything you can do for the youth of the City, you're putting all the money into the schools, that department right there, whatever programs they provide, look at giving them some more money. Then going down to the Fire Department. The new station over on East Industrial Park Drive has to be one of the slowest buildings that has ever been constructed in the world. Betsi, in the budget right here, I understand the Mayor only wants to operate that for six months starting in January. I hope you'd fight to get that thing opened up permanently. Police Department \$19 million. I'm sure you guys know that out of that \$19

million the Police Department has to provide something like a quarter of a million for outside traffic details at the Civic Center that comes out of our tax dollars. Have you stopped to think about how much they're going to have to do with the new ballpark? They are going to place 70 home games. You're probably going to have about that much again. About another quarter of a million dollars for outside traffic details. This fiscal year starts July 1st and runs through the end of June next year. That's three months worth of games. That's half the games. So the Police Department's going to have to come up with, let's say \$150,000 or so out of their budget to cover outside details for that. You might want to consider that one. Then over on the backside looking down to Elderly Services. \$295,000. I'm sure you must be cutting some stuff out of them. Look at giving them some more services. If anybody deserves it, they put the time in, they deserve it. \$105 million to run the City. \$127 million to run the schools. I think you guys need to seriously stop and look and have some fiscal restraints around here, because some day the State is going to pull back all free money that they're giving us. And if you keep letting the School Department budget increase \$3, \$4, \$5 million a year and in three or four years when they start pulling that money back, which I think is going to happen, you're going to be faced with one big school increase. Looking at the Civic Center. Again, keep a close eye on it. One question you might want to ask is, is there any type of a slush fund for ticket sales over there? To enhance the ticket sales to make you think you have a full house over there. And when that slush fund runs out are you going to have to start kicking more money in for the operation of that thing. You might want to start asking some questions.

George Sylvester stated I was just recently voted in as Chairman of the Concerned Taxpayers. I received this City of Manchester budget on Saturday morning. Hopefully you folks have had this for months, but I find one lacking thing in this budget. No where on the budget does it tell how many people in each department. So I don't know how you guys go through this unless you know all this to justify the money that people are asking for when you don't know how many employees each department has. Today I tried to call the City Clerk's office and the Human Resource to find out how many people in each department, and also to find out how many people made more than \$30,000 a year. I got passed from the City Clerk's office to Human Resources and Human Resources said...I said I need this today and they said no way possible. So I ask you, there's \$2 million in the IT budget and I'm wondering what they do with it. I would think that this day of computer age you ought to be able to press a few buttons and get the answers to these questions. So I'm a little bit amazed. If you look at the budget, and you know I've had it since Saturday morning, and I haven't spent a whole lot of time on it, but the thing that comes to the top of the heap is that Manchester does not spend a lot of money on frills and expenses. Manchester's expenses are salary and health benefits and so I say to you if you look around there's something you have to do is look at these departments and we've really got to look at downsizing. I went into the Internet and I did some investigation called National League of Cities and we've learned that Manchester's not alone in this situation. Seventy-five percent of the cities in the United States are under this kind of pressure. For example, to quote Mayor Michael Bloomberg of

New York City, he just announced that he's laying off 4,500 City employees and this goes from Boston to San Francisco. Boston is talking about 1,570 municipal jobs including 600 teachers. Chicago's laying off 100 top paid managers. San Francisco's is laying off 1,000 workers, San Diego 500 people, so people are fighting layoffs across the country and I think that it is your fiscal responsibility. I think I listened to up to this point a lot of worthy causes which should be funded and the only way Manchester can afford to fund these is you're going to have to look at the size of City government. I asked earlier today how many employees in the City, I heard anywhere from 2,000 to 2,800. I'm not sure...hopefully all of you know what the answer to that question is. But I think your responsibility is to look at the City budget and make some very, very difficult decisions, because everybody that spoke before me is asking for some kind of funding which is all worth while. I'm asking for some funding for the taxpayers of Manchester. It's time you guys did something not just increase the taxes, but give us a reduction in taxes. Thank you for listening to me.

Janet Stiles stated thank you for the opportunity to speak here. I too represent the Concerned Taxpayers of Manchester. I live at 226 Sagamore Street in Ward 2. We notice that the building maintenance 2004 recommended budget is \$5,491,386. The salaries are placed at \$709,358 and that's 13 percent of this budget for the building maintenance. How many employees? The health and dental insurance is \$126,185 that's 2.2 percent of this budget. The contracts are \$280,000, five percent. What are these contracts and what are they for? Contracts for manpower were \$3,643,692. Sixty-six percent is. What is this manpower for? We need to look closely at all of this and just giving the amounts in the budget doesn't answer a lot of questions. There are special projects at \$178,024. Three percent of what of what are these special projects? We need to look more closely and have it more definitive because it looks as though there might be padding anywhere through this and if we can't read it right, how are the taxpayers going to know where they are being soaked, or where they're really being able to pay somebody some good dollars. Thank you very much.

Lisa Houle stated I'm from the Farnum Center. We're an alcohol and drug rehabilitation center that's been around for 20 years in Manchester, located on 335 Hanover Street. We have three levels of care there. We have a 30 bed residential facility, an intensive outpatient department, and a traditional outpatient department. We service over 1,000 people a year with drug and alcohol problems, low income, and housing, and all kinds of life issues that start with the presenting problem of alcohol and drug issues. We want to thank everyone here for our support for building renovations and we want to continue to ask for continuing support throughout the year so we can continue offering quality services to those who are presenting problems of alcohol and drug use. We thank you for your past support and look forward to your continuing support so we can continue servicing that many people in the City of Manchester.

Robert Barry, 51 West Elmwood Avenue, stated I'm here to talk about a few of the little things, such as incidentals. In the City Solicitor's office and in the Traffic Department.

They add to \$51,202. I'd love to have an annual salary of that just to be able to spend that on incidentals. Another thing is the books for the City Solicitor's office coming to \$16,000. They've been spending \$22,000 in 2002 and they're looking for \$16,000 in 2003, \$16,000 in 2004. Why do they need all of these \$50,000 worth of books in only two years? Another thing, I believe that over \$50,000 of incidentals in just two departments, multiplied by all of the other departments can make a major impact on the tax rate. The Mayor is looking at a 5.9 percent increase over this year, and with last year over eight percent, is 14 percent in over two years, when inflation over the same time was just four percent. Thank you.

David Fitzgibbons, 77 Wellington Hill Road, stated I'm a member of the Concerned Taxpayers of Manchester. The proposed City budget calls for a 5.96 percent tax rate increase for FY2004. This increase follows a tax increase in excess of 8 percent for FY2003. The Manchester City budget resembles the Federal budget. It continues to grow and it never contracts. Why can't the City live within its income? When we do a household budget there are times we must reduce expenses to meet our income level. This is also a common practice in the private sector. The Consumer Price Index rose approximately three percent in the past 12 months, yet this City's administration is doubling that spending level. I'm shocked by the lack of fiscal restraint displayed by the City administration. Fiscal restraint starts at the top. I wonder how much pressure was applied to the City department heads to think out of the box and present budgets, which do not trigger a tax rate, increase. Mr. Mayor I ask you to look at the State governments in Concord, NH, in Boston, Mass. for a check on fiscal reality. I'd also check the proposed budget and I had a couple of questions. One was, what percentage of the insurance premium do City employees contribute? I work in the private sector and as most of you know health insurance has continued to rise at double digits and we've been forced to pass on more of the contribution to our employees. I would wonder what the City is doing to control their spiraling health costs. Also, the Information Systems budget is \$2,023,868. Salary represents over \$1 million. How many employees are in this department? Most information systems in private enterprise have just a handful of people. Because with the sophistication of hardware and software you don't need all of the people you used to need in these information systems. Also in their budget there's a service agreement for \$366,439. What are these agreements? Is their hardware old? Do we have poor software? That's a lot of money for service agreements. Staff development \$20,000. Why are we spending \$20,000 in these economic times? Train people internally. Information systems is always a prime department to achieve efficiencies because of the increased reliability of hardware and the sophistication of software. What has the City done to improve efficiencies in that department? I would also ask whether the City has a viable program in place to identify non-value added tasks in each City department, which if identified and eliminated, would increase employee efficiencies and eliminate waste. If you ask, I would like to know the results to date. If no, I strongly urge the Mayor and this board to implement such a waste reduction program to make the City government more efficient. Thank you very much for your time.

Jeff Michaelson stated I am the executive director, manager, janitor, chief and only statistician for Manchester Emergency Housing. I hadn't plan on coming here tonight but I'm here because I feel that I have an ethical responsibility to the people that we serve, to my staff, and to the volunteer Board of Directors for our non-profit organization. If you ask the question why is it that there is no CIP funding available to Manchester's only homeless shelter for families in the Greater Manchester area. This is an organization that provides over \$10,000 bed night a year to homeless women and children typically, and serves hundreds of adults and hundreds of children, dozens of pregnant women typically, and we typically have a dozen newborns during the course of the year in the house. So I just felt that I needed to ask that question. I would like to tell the members of the board that I intend to begin a dialogue with each of you and ask you to come and visit our facility and see what it is that we do. I know that Alderman Lopez has been by before on numerous occasions with donated items for the shelter. I believe Alderman O'Neil has been by also at one point. I would like to see my favorite Alderman Five from the best ward in the City come by and visit, and I would like to thank you for previous considerations and ask that we begin a dialogue so that we don't let this happen again.

William Tickler, 177 Lancelot Avenue, Ward 1, stated I am a member of the Concerned Taxpayers and about a year ago I was having coffee and this item here has to do with the Assessors office. I'm not here to ask for any money this evening but I'm here to tell you people that there are thousands of dollars owed to the City of Manchester for the people that are going to the Assessors office and filling out one of these exemption forms. I have spent about six or seven months investigating some of these claims and mainly I'm looking at the one that says total allowed assets of \$75,000 excluding your home. Now I know people that have Cadallics, they've got antiques, they've got checking and savings accounts, they have homes in Florida or at the beach, and they're getting this \$70,000 exemption off of their tax rate. That's off from the valuation. Now the other thing I found is I went to see Tom Nichols and Steve Tellier, both of whom are overworked and underpaid as far as I'm concerned and tried to get some information on why we're allowing these exemptions and why we're not looking into them. And his answer to me was, we just don't have enough time to examine and check all the exemptions. Then I look at some of these tax cards, and then I go down and investigate. Now there are people in Manchester that are applying for the \$100,000 exemption off from their valuation, they are applying for the \$75,000 worth of assets, and they're getting both. I think that the City of Manchester should get together with the Assessors office and review these tax cards and every six months we should update them. I've got tax cards here that people have been deceased, that have claimed for all kinds of exemptions and nothing is happening. Maybe you people can look into this situation and see if they can get some help down there to investigate where all these exemptions are coming from. I understand last year it was over \$15 million worth of new exemptions on this \$75,000 worth of total asset deal.

Chairman O’Neil advised that all wishing to speak having been heard, the comments presented shall be taken under consideration with actions by the Board and reports by the Committee on Finance to be made at a later date. On motion of Alderman Pinard, duly seconded by Alderman Thibault, it was voted to adjourn.

A True Record. Attest.

City Clerk